

More productivity, higher pay

Most governments want higher productivity, or say they do. Most grasp that if you get people to produce more goods or services in a working week you collect more revenue and can share that with employees.

Seeing that is not the same as selling it to those who need to deliver. Understanding it does not mean you can do it. Selling it requires explaining to people that the country can only afford more real pay if it produces more for people to buy with it. If you pay more money but there is no increase in goods you get inflation.

You then need to reassure people that you not saying they have to work harder or longer hours to raise their output. You want to help them work smarter. They may need training to add more value, or need more automation to speed their tasks.

Government Ministers can urge this but they need to show they can do it in those parts of the public sector they directly manage. The truth is the public sector has been particularly disappointing for productivity growth. Ministers now tell us they can slim the civil service. They should have a comprehensive ban on external recruitment to allow natural waste age to cut numbers. This gives employees more promotion opportunities. Ministers could authorise external appointment where there was no suitably skilled person in the current civil service.

GP appointments and waiting times

On Friday I joined a regular local health review meeting to hear from management where the NHS has reached in restoring services post covid and tackling waiting lists. I was told that activity levels are up on pre 2020 figures and all waits of over 2 years have been eliminated. A and E, GP appointments and 111 calls are all well up on past levels as the NHS seeks to tackle the backlogs.

If you vote Conservative you want

Conservative policies

It was a strange idea that in the Red Wall seats Labour voters had lent their votes to the Conservatives in 2019. It was an even stranger idea that that meant those voters wanted a Conservative government to behave more like a Labour one.

A vote is a vote. People mean it at the time. They will change at a later election if the party or person they voted for lets them down. In 2019 Conservative voters voted for Conservative ideas and abilities. They wanted levelling up tory style, where government gives people more chances to earn a good living, keep more of their own money, buy a home, get training and education to help them get on in the world. They look for a hand up not a hand out. They did not vote Conservative to have a bigger bureaucracy, more government or higher taxes.

Today in the aftermath of a couple of bad by election results the soul searching by Conservative Ministers should be easy. They should ask why haven't they yet delivered the lower taxes, the greater freedoms, the better opportunities to start a business, grow a company, own a home and all the other features of a successful growth and prosperity strategy. Why are taxes going up and why is the economy slowing down?

The way to recover is not to double down with Treasury austerity, new taxes and higher taxes. The way to recover is to live the dream, restore the brand – being a Conservative is all about backing people to succeed, getting out of the way of those who can do well and offering appropriate help to those who want to follow them.

My Question about strengthening UK Courts that should not be answerable to Foreign courts

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): This Parliament is the main guarantor of our rights and liberties; it created them in battles over many centuries for the benefit of us all. Would not this great role be strengthened if our Supreme Court were indeed supreme and not answerable to foreign courts that do not understand the mood of the British people and what they expect of their legislators?

Dominic Raab, Deputy Prime Minister, The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice: My right hon. Friend is absolutely correct. I know that when he gets a chance to peruse the proposals, he will find those principles

and that spirit reflected in the Bill of Rights, and I look forward to discussing these matters with him further.

[My Question on advancing UK prosperity post-Brexit](#)

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): I thank my right hon. Friend for all that he is doing to advance UK prosperity and growth, including this Bill. The common fisheries policy sunk many of our fishing boats. Can we have a policy to replace that fleet? The EU policy ripped up many of our orchards with grants. Can we have some UK money and a policy to replant our trees? The EU imposed VAT on us and has left us with a burden on our energy. Now surely is the time to use our freedoms and cut VAT.

Jacob Rees Mogg, Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency: My right hon. Friend is right: it is one of our freedoms. In his spring statement, the Chancellor announced some amelioration of VAT. I will ensure that my right hon. Friend's suggestion is passed on to the Chancellor.